



# **Wolf of Wessex**

*Matthew Harffy*

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AD 838. Deep in the forests of Wessex, Dunston's solitary existence is shattered when he stumbles on a mutilated corpse.

Accused of the murder, Dunston must clear his name and keep the dead man's daughter alive in the face of savage pursuers desperate to prevent a terrible secret from being revealed.

Rushing headlong through Wessex, Dunston will need to use all the skills of survival garnered from a lifetime in the wilderness. And if he has any hope of victory against the implacable enemies on their trail, he must confront his long-buried past – becoming the man he once was and embracing traits he had promised he would never return to. The Wolf of Wessex must hunt again; honour and duty demand it.

**'A page-turner ... Matthew Harffy tells a great story' Joanna Hickson.**

**'A breathtaking novel that sweeps the reader into a dark and dangerous world' Paul Fraser Collard.**

**'Harffy's writing just gets better and better ... He is really proving himself the rightful heir to Gemmell's crown' Jemahl Evans.**

**'Harffy has a real winner on his hands ... A genuinely superb novel' Steven McKay.**

## Wolf of Wessex Details

### Wolf of Wessex

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## **Ned Lud says**

I believe it is safe to claim that Mr. Harffyy is now a 'heavyweight' in the Historical Fiction genre.

## **Kathy says**

I was fortunate enough to be granted the privilege to read advanced copy of this grand historical saga covering the year 838 when plots were uncovered against Wessex, where King Ecgberht reigned. The Danes had eyes on Cornwall and the story begins with brutal killings in trying to prevent a monk to deliver a message of warning to the king.

The author provides the reader with a helpful guide at the beginning with definitions such as: Cornwalum= Cornwall, the westernmost part of the older kingdom of Dumnonia...and the people were known as the Westwalas (West Welsh)", etc.

Our hero in this tale is an older former warrior, Dunston, who prefers living quietly in the woods with his dog. He served the king for many years in battle but promised his deceased wife he would stop killing. One day, however, he finds the body of a man brutally killed close to his home. Soon after the frightened daughter of this man appears. The plan becomes one of transferring the body on a cart to the nearby Reeve.

The challenge of being accused of the murder and jailed after finding there was "a new sheriff in town" is just one of the many hurdles Dunston along with Aedwen, the daughter of the murdered man, must face in this action filled and moving story.

There are many well described combat scenes including axes, swords, spears and arrows. Now that I have had a taste of this author's writing and commitment to historical research I will be reading more of his books.

## **Petrik says**

### **A great self-contained historical fiction novel.**

If you're into historical fiction and Bernard Cornwell's work, you probably have heard about *The Bernicia Chronicles* series by Matthew Harffyy. I wasn't ready for another commitment to a long historical fiction series at the moment, but at the same time, I also wanted to try Harffyy's work. Seeing that *Wolf of Wessex* has been praised by many of his readers as one of his finest work—and it's standalone—I decided to start my journey with Harffyy's books here. And the book met my expectation.

“...there were only two things you could ever be sure of in life: the passage of time and the unexpected. Today, he had been reminded of both.”

The year is AD838, deep in the serene forest of Wessex, Dunston's solitary life turns chaotic when he stumbles upon a mutilated corpse. Accused of the murder, Dunston has to keep Aedwen—the dead man's daughter—alive while finding the truth surrounding the brutal murder. The story is as simple as the premise implies; there weren't any notable surprises or twists to the plotlines, and there's a good chance that you'll be able to predict how the story starts, progresses, and ends. However, don't let this opinion fool you into thinking that *Wolf of Wessex* isn't worth checking out; it does, especially if you're a fan of a self-contained

historical fiction novel with well-written characters and action sequences.

“Men always strive for what they do not have. But to reach the object of their desire does not make them content. When a man attains his goals, he merely looks further to the horizon, for the next prize. It is why men will never be happy and why we will never know peace.”

I’m sure I have mentioned this somewhere before, but I enjoy reading stories about a parent figure—with no blood relations—that suddenly has to do everything in their power to protect their newfound daughter/son. This is pretty much the main strength of *Wolf of Wessex*’s narrative. Dunston is almost 50 years old, and although he has Odin—his one-eyed dog—by his side, he continues to long for the past. This is why I loved Aedwen’s sudden and unpredictable emergence into Dunston and Odin’s life; witnessing the relationship developments with each other gradually being strengthened amidst their journey of survival felt wholesome. Plus, Harffyy has a writing style that shows his knowledge of what he’s writing about is real. The atmosphere of the forest, the weapons-handling, and the battles felt real to me.

“How quickly the years washed by, sweeping away loved ones and youth and leaving only fading memories.”

I haven’t started Harffyy’s supposed magnum opus, *The Bernicia Chronicles* series, yet and I can already see why many readers mentioned him to be the next successor to Bernard Cornwell. *Wolf of Wessex* is a gripping and satisfying standalone. The story may not surprise you, but if you’re looking for a well-told historical fiction story to read, you can’t go wrong with choosing this one. It probably won’t be soon—I still need to finish reading *The Last Kingdom* series first—but I definitely will look into reading *The Bernicia Chronicles* eventually.

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